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INFORMATION FROM

FOREIGN DOCUMENTS OR RADIO BROADCASTS

REPORT

CD NO.

50X1-HUM

COUNTRY USSR

SUBJECT Political - Soviet ideology

HOW
PUBLISHED Daily newspapers

WHERE
PUBLISHED USSR

DATE
PUBLISHED 6 Feb-3 Mar 1949

LANGUAGE Russian

DATE OF INFORMATION 1949

DATE DIST. 6 Apr 1949

NO. OF PAGES 2

SUPPLEMENT TO
REPORT NO.

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SOVIET THEATER CRITICS CENSURED

MOSCOW CRITICS ACCUSED FIRST -- Sovetskaya Estoniya, No 30, 6 Feb 49

An important event in the ideological life of the Soviet Union was the exposing of an antipatriotic group of theater critics, who were obstructing the development of Soviet theater art. Every effort is being made to stamp out any signs of cosmopolitanism in art. A group of Moscow theater critics who called themselves "Judges of art" had been active until quite recently. The group included such critics as Yu. Yuzovskiy, A. Gurvich, I. Altman, A. Borshchagovskiy, G. Boyadzhiev, L. Malyugin, and several others, all of whom were completely alien to the Soviet nation. They had been trying to slander all achievements of Soviet dramatic art, viewing it from the standpoint of decadent bourgeois estheticism.

A general purge of the Soviet theater field is being made to free it from the pernicious influence of such antinational elements.

LENINGRAD -- Leningradskaya Pravda, No 32, 9 Feb 49

A group of Leningrad theater critics have been guilty of the same offenses as the Moscow critics recently accused of "cosmopolitanism" and "bourgeois estheticism" in drama criticism.

S. Dreyden, M. Yankovskiy, I. Berezark, I. Shneyderman, and S. Tsimbal, all Leningrad critics, are charged with having an anti-Soviet attitude in their appreciation of dramatic art. They have consistently belittled and disapproved of modern Soviet plays and, at the same time, praised plays lacking in Soviet ideology. These critics have had a strong and harmful influence on the public mind. However, measures have been taken to prevent these people from further hindering the development of true Soviet art.

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CLASSIFICATION

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ESTONIA -- Sovetskaya Estoniya, No 50, 2 Mar 49

The TsK KP(b) of Estonia called a conference of workers of the press, theater and critics, party representatives, and others, for the purpose of discussing the status of theater criticism in the Estonian SSR. The following critics were censured for their anti-Soviet attitude: N. Andrezen, P. Viyding, Kylli, Rasmus Kasmro-Pool', Karin Kask, G. Tugolesov, S. Levin, Lumet, and Tulik. The Estonian SSR newspapers Sovetskaya Estoniya, Rakhva Khyayal', and Noorte Khyayal' were also severely criticized for publishing reviews and articles by the above named critics. In this connection, the paper Sirp ya Vasar was particularly offensive in its antipatriotic attitude.

LATVIA -- Sovetskaya Latvya, No 50, 2 Mar 49

A meeting of Riga arts and literary workers took place on 28 February. A. Ya. Pel'she, secretary of TsK KP(b) of Latvia, reported on the status of theater criticism in the Latvian SSR. A number of Latvian critics were severely censured for their bourgeois and anti-Soviet attitude. A. Chak was accused of "formalism," "menshevik" ideology, and finding fault with the works of Soviet dramatists. Other critics accused of an anti-Soviet trend of thought are Kiyava (Paberzs), Brikskis, Nikolayev-Bergin.

The speaker also mentioned the Riga critics Gurevich and Kats, who are said to be infected by the poison of cosmopolitanism and bourgeois estheticism. Ozolin', editor of the Latvian newspaper Tsinya, admitted that he had made a mistake in publishing Chak's harmful reviews. The members of the conference passed a resolution censuring the activity of the above-mentioned theater critics, and also pointing out serious shortcomings in the field of music review. The resolution stated that there was no place among the ranks of Soviet critics for representatives of reactionary theories of cosmopolitanism.

UKRAINE -- Pravda Ukrainy, No 51, 3 Mar 49

Gel'fandbeyn, a Khar'kov theater and art critic, has been accused of writing harmful drama, moving-picture, and book reviews. His antipatriotic statements were an attempt to divert the Soviet theater from the right path. His attacks were directed mainly against the Theater imeni T. G. Shevchenko, one of the best theaters not only in the Ukraine but in the entire USSR, which had twice been awarded the Stalin prize. He criticized General Vatutin, a new play by L. Daiterko, ignoring its high-political content and party significance. Gel'fandbeyn, who is supposedly an adherent of the antipatriotic group of theater critics headed by Yuzovskiy, even criticizes the plays of M. Gor'kiy, minimizing their dramatic qualities.

Several other critics, including V. Morskoy, L. Zhadanov, and B. Milyavskiy, have been writing harmful reviews in Ukrainian papers. They all follow the same pattern as Gel'fandbeyn.

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